

Message Text

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TAGS: TPHY, CA, US

SUBJECT: WEATHER MODIFICATION MEETING

REF: OTTAWA 0130, JANUARY 14

1. AS SCHEDULED, U.S. TEAM MET ON FEB. 8 WITH COUNTERPART CANADIANS AS FIRST STEP IN EXPLORATION OF BILATERAL CONCERNS REGARDING WEATHER MODIFICATION ACTIVITIES. HAFHEY (EXTAFF SCI DIRECTOR) CHAIRED MEETING AND OPENED IT WITH GENERAL STATEMENT OF PURPOSE FOR MEETING AS SEEN BY CANADIAN GROUP COMPOSED OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (LEGAL, SCIENCE, USA DIVISION) AND ENVIRONMENT (INTERNATIONAL DIVISION AND ATMOSPHERIC SERVICES). IN OPENING REMARKS, HAFHEY STRESSED THAT MEETING WAS INFORMAL AND SHOULD BE CONSIDERED HIGHLY EXPLORATORY. HE NOTED CANADIAN CONCERNS REGARDING PROPOSED WEATHER MODIFICATION IN SKAGIT VALLEY, BUT STRESSED THAT SKAGIT SITUATION ONLY INDICATED NEED FOR BILATERAL APPRECIATION OF PROBLEMS OF WEATHER MODIFICATION.

2. AFTER REVIEW BY EACH DELEGATION OF FEDERAL AND PROVINCIAL/ STATE LAWS AND REGULATIONS, IT BECAME EVIDENT THAT ALTHOUGH CONSIDERABLY MORE STATES THAN PROVINCES HAVE ACTIVELY ENTERED INTO THE AREA OF WEATHER MODIFICATION, THE OVERALL LEGAL PICTURE IN BOTH COUNTRIES IS APPROXIMATELY EQUIVALENT,
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ESPECIALLY AT THE FEDERAL LEVEL.

3. INASMUCH AS REGULATIONS TO IMPLEMENT THE CANADIAN FEDERAL REPORTING LEGISLATION HAVE NOT BEEN PROMULGATED, IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO MAKE A FIRM QUANTITATIVE COMPARISON BETWEEN THE EXTENT OF OPERATIONAL WEATHER MODIFICATION ACTIVITIES IN THE TWO COUNTRIES. IT WAS THE IMPRESSION OF AT LEAST ONE MEMBER OF THE CANADIAN TEAM THAT OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES IN CANADA WERE VIRTUALLY INSIGNIFICANT. THIS DOES NOT COINCIDE WITH IMPRESSIONS AVAILABLE TO OTHER MEMBERS OF THE CANADIAN TEAM AND EMBASSY OFFICERS, ESPECIALLY AS OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES RELATE TO HAIL SUPPRESSION PROGRAMS IN THE PLAINS PROVINCES AND THE NUMBER OF LICENSED AIRCRAFT OPERATORS SUSPECTED OF OFFERING WEATHER MODIFICATION SERVICES.

4. IN SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSION, TWO MAJOR ASPECTS OF WEATHER MODIFICATION WERE RECOGNIZED. THE PRINCIPAL AND PERHAPS MOST PRESSING WAS PUBLIC CONCERN OVER POSSIBLE TRANSBOUNDARY EFFECTS OF WEATHER MODIFICATION ACTIVITIES. THE CANADIANS STRESSED THAT THIS ASPECT OF THE PROBLEM IS VIRTUALLY DIVORCED FROM THE TRUE STATE OF THE ART AND THAT REALITY MAY WELL BE RELATIVELY LESS IMPORTANT THAN PUBLIC PERCEPTION THEREOF. THE SECOND ASPECT OF THE PROBLEM, WHICH IS ALREADY WELL IN HAND ON A HIGHLY INFORMAL SCIENTIST-TO-SCIENTIST BASIS, IS COORDINATION AND IN SOME CASES COOPERATION BETWEEN ATMOSPHERIC SCIENTISTS IN BOTH COUNTRIES TO ADVANCE THE STATE OF THE ART FOR FUTURE MUTUAL BENEFITS.

5. CANADIAN DELEGATION CONTINUALLY ALLUDED TO DESIRABILITY OF PRIOR CONSULTATION IN WEATHER MODIFICATION FIELD, WHICH HAS BECOME VIRTUALLY A CANADIAN THEME IN NUMEROUS OTHER FORA.

6. BOTH SIDES EXPRESSED INTEREST IN SUITABLY INSTITUTIONALIZING THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON CURRENT WEATHER MODIFICATION ACTIVITIES THROUGH APPROPRIATE CHANNELS (DIPLOMATIC AND TECHNICAL). PRESENT U.S. REPORTING REGULATIONS, AND PROPOSED CANADIAN REGULATIONS, WOULD PROVIDE FEDERAL AUTHORITIES OF BOTH COUNTRIES WITH COMPARABLE DATA FOR SUCH AN EXCHANGE.

7. IN THIS CONNECTION, POSSIBLE ROLE FOR IJC WAS RAISED BY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CANADIANS. CANADIAN SIDE SUGGESTED THAT IJC MIGHT BE GIVEN AUTHORITY TO CONSIDER WEATHER MODIFICATION ACTIVITIES HAVING POSSIBLE TRANSBORDER EFFECTS, AND MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS ON APPROPRIATENESS OF SUCH ACTIVITIES. AFTER CONSIDERABLE DISCUSSION AND IN VIEW OF THE LACK OF OPERATIONAL EXPERIENCE, LIMITATIONS IN THE STATE OF THE ART, AND LIMITED DATA CURRENTLY AVAILABLE TO GOVERNMENTS, A CONSENSUS EMERGED THAT REFERRAL TO THE IJC AT THIS TIME DID NOT APPEAR TO BE THE

MOST PRODUCTIVE FIRST STEP. INSTEAD, THE TWO SIDES AGREED TO EXCHANGE DRAFTS ON OR BEFORE MAY 1 OF A POSSIBLE BILATERAL AGREEMENT RELATING TO THE EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION ON CURRENT WEATHER MODIFICATION ACTIVITIES.

8. THE MEETING CONCLUDED WITH A BRIEF GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE MULTILATERAL IMPLICATIONS OF WEATHER MODIFICATION. JOHNSON

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